

Abraham Lincoln papers

James Q. Howard, Biographical Notes¹, May 1860

¹ James Q. Howard was sent to Springfield in May 1860 to gather information for a campaign biography. These are presumed to be Howard's own notes on Lincoln's background, which seem to have been acquired by John G. Nicolay for use in the biography of Lincoln he wrote with John Hay. Nicolay made copies of them for Hay, which copies survive in the Brown University Library. These have been consulted in transcribing parts of the ensuing text which have become so faded as to be virtually illegible. The information Howard collected, with the cooperation and assistance of Lincoln and his staff, was used in William Dean Howells's campaign biography, as well as a brief one written by Howard himself. Later, Josiah G. Holland had access to these notes and incorporated some of the information they contain into his biography published in 1866. See William Dean Howells, *The Lives and Speeches of Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin* (Columbus: Follett, Foster and Company, 1860), James Quay Howard, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Columbus: Follett, Foster and Company, 1860), and Josiah G. Holland, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Massachusetts: Gurdon Bill, 1866).

Howard seems to have interviewed first in Springfield: Lincoln himself, John T. Stuart, William Butler, and William G. Greene. The presence of a second Greene interview in Petersburg and Menard County suggests that Howard's appetite for stories about Lincoln in New Salem may have been whetted by what Greene and Stuart told him. It is not clear where or when he found George Close, who was from Macon County.

Howard's page-numbering of his notes, together with the evidence of the paper and ink, indicate that seven discrete units are present in the surviving material and that a portion of one these units (Menard County interviews) is missing. The notes are given here in the order of the Library of Congress's mounting numbers, an order which is quite arbitrary and misleading. The seven units and the probable order in which they were written are:

1. Abraham Lincoln interview
2. Lincoln's 1849 District of Columbia bill
3. First John T. Stuart interview
4. William Butler interview, plus miscellaneous notes
5. First William G. Greene interview

6. Menard County informants (Dr. John Allen, Dr. Stevenson, Mentor Graham, Henry McHenry, L. M. Smith, L. M. Green, Royal Clary), plus second Greene and Stuart interviews

7. George Close interview

Dr. John Allen²

2 Dr. Allen was a physician residing and practicing in New Salem when Lincoln lived there. He was a temperance reformer and strict sabbatarian.

Lincoln was appointed Post Master at New Salem in 1832, by Pres. Jackson. Was almost the only man then there who could make out the returns. Never saw a man better pleased— Will not be so well pleased, if he is elected President of the U. S. Was because, as he said, he would then have access to all the News papers — never yet being able to get the half that he wanted before. First speech L made in that region was at a country debating club which met in an old store house. Did pretty well— Used to walk 6 miles to attend another debating Society, and “practice polemics” as they said. These “polemics” were equal sometimes to the best farces played in theatre. With but a rare exception, Clubs were composed of men of no education whatever.

While P. M., was appointed Deputy Surveyor— Surveyed from 1832 to 1834 pretty steadily— Came to New Salem in Spring of 1831— Spring of '32 went to Black Hawk War—

Man who was a candidate for Captain against L.³ he had formerly worked for but had fallen out with him and left him because he was so tyrannical. Way Capt. was Chosen was that the candidate stood out alone and the men walked to the man that they chose to be their leader. At least three out of every four went to Lincoln at once, when it was found that he was the Choice they kept coming over to him from until his opponent was left standing almost alone— He was the most influential man in neighborhood and I felt badly to see see him cut so.

3 William Kirkpatrick was this competing candidate to lead the New Salem company in the Black Hawk War. Kirkpatrick operated a sawmill in the area; Lincoln had hauled logs for him.

Dr. Stevenson of Menard Co.⁴

4 This is very likely Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson of Petersburg. During the Civil War he was surgeon of the 14th Illinois Infantry. After leaving the service in 1864, he located in Springfield, and after the war was one of the founders of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Lincoln surveyed town of Petersburg, county seat of Menard Co, formerly Sangamon Co. Sawed half day with Cross cut-saw against four men who were trying to make him give out. L said he never worked harder— A friend of mine of once met a part of long nine⁵ and other members of legislature coming from Vandalia at end of session— Were all on horseback but L who Kept up with them on foot, being too poor to keep a horse— L complain of cold; one of long nine said it was no wonder for there was so much of him on the ground—

5 The nine members of the Tenth Illinois General Assembly (1836-37) from Sangamon County were all at least six feet tall and hence were dubbed the “Long Nine.” Lincoln of course was one of them.

Gov. of Indiana, being in company with Offutt⁶ and Lincoln awhile, told Offutt that that young man had talent enough in him to make a president—

6 Denton Offutt engaged Lincoln to help take a flatboat of merchandise to New Orleans in 1831. He later was Lincoln's first employer in New Salem.

Mentor Graham⁷

7 Mentor Graham taught school near New Salem. He probably helped Lincoln in studying grammar and surveying.

When L was about 22 said he believed he must study Grammar— one could not be obtained in neighborhood— walked 7 or 8 miles and borrowed Kirkham's old Grammar. In 1829 made the rails— Was clerking for Offutt in New Salem, in dry goods store about one year— Well liked by every body — What he said, every one relied on— Was surety for Berry—⁸ his compass chain, etc. were sold on execution— James Short⁹ bought them and gave them back to him.

8 William Berry was Lincoln's partner in a storekeeping venture in New Salem.

9 James Short was one of Lincoln's best friends in New Salem. In 1861, President Lincoln appointed his old friend the agent for the Round Valley Indian Reservation in California.

Lincoln tells the story on himself that when his flat boat got full of water he bored a hole in the bottom and let the water out— Explanation is that the boat was fast on the mill dam and the end over the dam being lowest the water ran to that end—

When I first saw Lincoln he was lying on a trundle bed rocking a cradle with his foot — “was almost covered with papers and books— There was one half foot space between bottom of pants and top of socks—

Henry McHenry—¹⁰

10 Henry McHenry lived near New Salem and was a good friend of Lincoln.

I went to L with a case to prosecute — would not take it because he said I was not strictly in the right — Could give the other party a great deal of trouble and perhaps beat him but had better let suit alone. In 1833, I think went to Springfield and bought at an auction a copy of Blackstone— When he began to study law he would go day after day for weeks and sit under an oak tree on hill near Salem, and read — moved round tree to keep in shade — was so absorbed that people said he was crazy— Sometimes did not notice people when he met them—

Had a case on hands for me for three years, and took it through three Courts to Supreme Court and only charged me \$75.

When he used to speak there was always profound silence— Never knew him to swear or drink a drop of liquor in his life

Was always on the side of the weak—

L. M. Smith who was in L company says he thinks L finally got every vote for Captain—¹¹

11 This name may be incorrectly recorded. There is no L. M. Smith on the roster of Lincoln's company and no information has been found for someone of that name.

If I should mention any one thing as eminently peculiar of Lincoln, it would be that during an acquaintance of 30 years, I never heard him state or contend for any thing that he did not believe— Denton Offutt once said that he thought L had a better mind than any man in the U. S.¹²

12 A few pages of this unit are missing at this point.

Lincoln's course from 1829 to 1846.¹³

13 This is apparently a characterization of the contents of the ensuing testimony. If there were originally others in addition to the surviving one of George Close, there is no trace of them in this collection. Note that the Close interview ends with a remark about Lincoln's driving hogs in the 1830s: "Drove to head waters of Sangamon River to feed and pack them." The evidence of the pagination of the manuscript indicates that what follows belongs not to the interview with Close, but with the Menard County informants: Allen, Stevenson, Graham, McHenry, L. M. Smith.

George Close¹⁴ who split rails with Lincoln, says, L came from Indiana to Macon Co. Ill. in fall of 1829— Was there working by Clay's works, chopping wood, splitting rails, and going about wherever he could get work. I helped him make rails for James Hanks and William Miller— Made about 1000 together—

14 George Close was a neighbor of Lincoln when Lincoln resided with his father's family in Macon County, Illinois in 1830-31, after departing from Indiana and before moving to New Salem.

Lincoln had nothing only plenty of friends — has always had them. He helped to put up first house in Decatur— Gen. W. L. D. Ewing¹⁵ and a man named Posey¹⁶ were candidates for legislature in 1829 — came to Decatur to make speeches — as Posey did not treat we persuaded L to get up and abuse him— Said he would if I would not laugh at him — was frightened but got warmed up and made the best Speech of the day. This was L first Speech— Did not abuse Posey but spoke well of both men — pictured out the future of Ill. When he got through Ewing said "he was a bright one"!

15 William Lee Davidson Ewing was at various times Illinois lieutenant governor, United States Senator, and Illinois legislator. He was a colleague of Lincoln in the General Assembly, and sometimes his bitter antagonist.

16 John F. Posey was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives from Macon County in 1830.

His pants were made of flax and tow, cut tight at the ankle — his knees were both out. Was the roughest looking man I ever saw — poor boy, but welcomed to everybody's house.

Visited some friends in Mason Co. their table was hewn out of a log and had but three legs— made use of his long leg to hold up the table— Got from 25 to 30 cts. per hundred for splitting rails — never got any money — was paid in Socks, Jeans, etc.

Bargain with Mrs. Nancy Miller was this — was to maul 400 rails for each yard of brown Jeans dyed with white walnut bark, until he got enough to make a pair of pants.

God never made a finer man than Abraham Lincoln: Need not be with a man more than an hour to gain his good will. Hard time to get work— All a man could do was to keep himself in clothes— Walked 5, 6 and 7 miles to his day's works. always had something new and interesting to talk about. Started from Decatur with a drove of hogs owned by Denton Offutt. Got 7 or 8 dolls. per month— Drove to head waters of Sangamon River to feed and pack them—¹⁷

¹⁷ This marks the end of the surviving text of Howard's interview with George Close. The testimony that follows immediately has been mistakenly identified as a continuation of Close's testimony, but the pagination of the manuscript and the content strongly suggests that it was given by an informant whose identity remains unknown. The pages containing the first part of the interview are missing and presumably belong to the same numbering sequence as the pages containing earlier Menard County informants: Allen, Stevenson, Graham, McHenry, and Smith.

His favorite paper was the "Louisville Journal," which he for many years studied — and paid for when he had not money enough to dress decently— First political speech he ever made at the north end of where Petersburg now stands— Spoke on the general issues between the whigs and democrats, at that time. Although party feeling ran high and Lincoln was a strong Adams man, in the New Salem precinct he got one more vote than both the Jackson and the Adams candidate for Congress, put together— This was in 1832. Official vote as shown by poll book in Clerk's office in Springfield is as follows;

For CongressJonathan H. Pugh 179

Joseph Duncan97

A. Lincoln for Legislature277

At the election in 1834 his majority was almost equally decisive— This was the last time he was the candidate while living at New Salem— A candidate named Taylor whom L thought unqualified, though he could make Lincoln vote for him, by going to the polls with L and reading aloud his ticket

which was for Lincoln — but L in the same open manner voted for Taylor's opponent— — Truth and honesty have made him what he is—

William G. Green—¹⁸

18 William G. Greene clerked with Lincoln in Denton Offutt's store in New Salem, and served in Lincoln's Black Hawk War company. He later was successful in business. Lincoln appointed him collector of internal revenue in his district.

(see another page)¹⁹

19 This refers to an earlier interview with Greene, *q.v.* above.

Explanation of way L went into Grocery business is this— I rode up to Radford's²⁰ one day soon after "Clarys Grove Boys"²¹ had broken his windows R said he was determined to sell out— I at random offered him \$400 for whole stock— Said he would take it— Lincoln came in next day — proposed that we should take an inventory and see what kind of a bargain I had made— Did so and found the "traps" were worth \$600— L who was then out of employment, said he would give me \$125 for my bargain Proposed that they (Land and Berry) should take my place — ie — give their notes to Radford and I withdraw mine— R would not do this without I would be surety— L kept Store on his own hook about 9 mos. Berry was very trifling and failed— I went in with L and helped him close up the business— I knew nothing about law, and supposed that it was my duty to pay Berry's half of notes and was surprised 5 or six years afterwards when I had gone to Tennessee to live, that he was now ready to pay to me what I had paid for his partner Berry—

20 Reuben Radford was an unlucky storekeeper in New Salem.

21 The Clary's Grove boys were a band of frontier toughs who frequented New Salem.

L. M. Green a lawyer of Petersburg.²²

22 L.M. Greene was a brother of William Greene, and had known Lincoln in New Salem.

Offutt said L had been so faithful that he would make him his chief clerk—

Walked 6 miles to debating Club in '31 and '32—

Every time I went to Salem he took me out on the hill and got me to explain to him Kirkham—
Said to me one day that all his folks seemed to have good sense but none of them had become distinguished, and he believed it was for him to become so— had talked with men who had the reputation of being great men, but could not see that they differed from other men— I never knew him in one instance to deviate from the strictest principles of integrity and morality—

Read every thing he could get hold off— what was difficult to most persons seemed open to him—
John Calhoun²³ late of Kansas being County surveyor appointed L deputy— Was a good surveyor — found as many old corners as any one— Was Post master one year— He always made a good speech First political speech made every one warm for him— L made a speech in 1834 which carried the people away— Many then said he would be Governor

23 John Calhoun was an Illinois Democratic activist and office-holder. After Kansas Territory was organized in 1854 he was made surveyor-general there, and he presided over the Kansas convention that produced the Lecompton Constitution.

Rial Clary—²⁴

24 Royal Clary was a member of Lincoln's Black Hawk War company. He witnessed the famous initiatory fight between Lincoln and Jack Armstrong in New Salem.

Goods for Store were hauled from Beardstown Jack Armstrong²⁵ legged Lincoln— Jack said before his death that he threw L but did not do it fairly— He won us by his bravery and boldness— Jack and were the warmest friends during life—

Jack whipped a man for abusing L. Was but one man in army that could throw L down — he was Thompson,²⁶ and by his superior sciences th could throw every body— L tried to make Jack Armstrong Door Keeper of House— Was elected from New Salem but once—

25 Jack Armstrong, a leader of the Clary's Grove Boys, had fought Lincoln in a rowdy initiation rite in New Salem. He later was Lincoln's good friend, there, and a member of Lincoln's Black Hawk War company.

26 Lorenzo Dow Thompson of St. Clair County, Illinois

Hon. John T. Stuart—²⁷

27 This is almost certainly the second interview of Stuart that Howard took, *q. v.* below.

We got back from Black Hawk war ten days f before election— L's friends had proposed him for legislature—

There are no striking points in his history — groth was steady, gradual and constant— L not so ready or ingenious as Douglas— first impressions not reliable— When he has time to reflect is a very safe man—

Better at defending and improving existing systems than in originating—

Does not believe in re-forming so much as perfecting—

I believe if elected Pres. he will have a purer administration than there has ever been in our Country — Mind of a metaphysical and philosophical order— His knowledge of the languages is limited but in other respects I consider a man of very general and varied Knowledge— Has made Geology and other Sciences especial Study—

Has an inventive faculty— Is always studying into the nature of things Oldest boy 17— Wife is a woman of fine intellect very ambitious— Sincerity his forte before a jury— excels in whatever requires close reasoning—

Hon. John T. Stuart's Statement.²⁸

28 This is almost certainly the first statement given by Stuart (for the second, see immediately above). It may well have sparked Howard's interest in the New Salem wrestling match between Lincoln and Jack Armstrong. As the text has faded badly and is illegible at

many points, the unreadable text has been supplied from a copy that Nicolay made for his partner John Hay in the 1870s, which is now in the Brown University Library.

My first Knowledge of Mr. Lincoln was in 1830. At that time when he was 21, he came down the Sangamon River in a canoe, and was hired, together with two others, by a man by the name of Offutt, to build a flatboat with which to convey produce to New Orleans. Lincoln went to New Orleans with the boat, and returning during the latter part of the same year, took up his residence at New Salem, now Petersburg, Menard County, Ill. There lived at this time in and around New Salem, a band of rollicking, roystering fellows, known throughout all this region as the "Clary's Grove Boys." These rowdies, although they included among their number many of the most influential men of the central region of Illinois, were emphatically wild and rough, and were the terror of all those who did not belong to the company. These "Boys" in connection with the duty of regulating the neighborhood took it upon themselves to try the mettle of every new comer and ascertain what sort of stuff he was made of by appointing some one of their number to wrestle, fight or run a foot race with him, as the case might be.

In person of young Lincoln they thought they had found only another subject by which this band could display its strength and prowess. The champion of the clan, Jack Armstrong was selected to wrestle with Lincoln and to show him that although six feet three he was no man at all compared with the "Boys." It did not take Jack long to discover that he had got hold of the wrong customer; and when it was evident that Lincoln was getting the better of their champion the whole Band pitched in and gave Lincoln several blows which had no very salutary effect on the strength of his legs. Lincoln however took all this in perfect good humor and by laughing and joking displayed such an excellent disposition that he at once won their hearts and was invited to become one of the company. This was the turning point in Lincoln's life.

When the Black Hawk war broke out, Lincoln was elected by these same men Captain of a Company raised in what was then Sangamon Co. and through the popularity gained in the war was elected to legislature &c.

Some of these "Clary's Grove Boys," now among the most influential men in Ill. are Mr. Lincoln's warmest friends and declare that if Lincoln had got mad when they pitched on to him, they would have thrashed him so that he could not have walked home.

Mr. Stuart says I first met Lincoln at Beardstown, Ill., the place of rendezvous for several companies of which L had been elected captain of one and I of another. I was a few days after elected Major of the battallion. Lincoln was exceedingly popular while in the service on account of being so good

natured, genial, upright, and on account of being able to tell a Story better and more of them, than any man in the batallion.

He was popular on account of his physical strength. Wrestling took place almost every day in which contests Lincoln had but one equal. He made a good officer.

On our return in 1832 Lincoln and I were both candidates for the legislature. he as a Clay man, I as a Jackson man. On account of the Jackson men being in the majority at the time, & Lincoln being little known in my part of the county, he was defeated, but in his own part of the county his vote was almost unanimous.

About this time he got some mathematical works and a Surveyors compass and made his living by surveying.

In 1834 he was a candidate of the Whigs for state legislature and was elected. During this canvass Lincoln and I met at what was called in those times a "Beef-shooting" There being several candidates for legislature, and my own election being conceded, some disaffected ones of my own party took L to the one side and told him they would transfer votes enough from me to him to elect him if he would agree to it. Lincoln immediately took me behind a bush and told me of the dishonest proposition, and declared he would not consent to it for any office.

Lincoln says, my name should be written "Abraham Lincoln".²⁹

29 This is Howard's direct interview with Lincoln. Lincoln was presumably careful not to give Howard a long, detailed account of his life, preferring to steer him toward knowledgeable sources such as Stuart, Butler, and Greene (see their interviews herein). In this context, it is interesting to note what he did agree to talk about — his abortive bill for abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. What he says about tariffs may have been intended to serve as a general cautionary note to his campaign biographers.

Before giving notice to introduce a Bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia I visited Mayor Seaton and others whom I thought best acquainted with the sentiments of the people, to ascertain if a Bill such as I proposed would be endorsed by them according to its provisions.

Being informed that it would meet with their hearty approbation I gave notice in congress that I should introduce a Bill. Subsequently I learned that many leading southern members of Congress, had been to see the Mayor, and the others who favored my Bill, and had drawn them over to their way of thinking.

Finding that I was abandoned by my former backers and having little personal influence, I dropped the matter knowing that it was useless to prosecute the business at that time.

I my mind has been in process of education since that time, do not know that I would now approve of the Bill, but that in the main, think that I would.

Mr. L says, "the Tariff subject must be touched lightly. My speeches in favor of a Protective Tariff would please Pennsylvania and offend W. C. Bryant in the same degree. It is like the case of three men who had nothing to cover them but a blanket only sufficient to cover two. When No 1 pulled it on off No 3."

(I understand Lincoln to say that he never offered his bill as an amendment. Will see about it. H.)

From "Illinois Daily Journal"

of Jan. 29, 1849.³⁰

30 Howard presumably copied this text of Lincoln's abortive District of Columbia Bill from the backfiles of Springfield's Whig (later Republican) newspaper. A draft of this bill in Lincoln's hand is also in this collection. This episode in Lincoln's political career was of great interest in that it established his anti-slavery credentials.

Slavery in the District of Columbia.

Mr Lincoln of Illinois offered the following amendment to Mr. Gotts resolution. No vote has yet been taken on this proposition:

"Strike out all after the word 'Resolved' and insert the following, to wit: That the Committee for the District of Columbia be instructed to report a bill in substance as follows:

"Be it enacted &c., That no person now within the District of Columbia, nor now owned by any person or persons now resident within the same it, nor hereafter born within it shall be held in slavery within said District.

"Sec. 2

That no person now within said District, or now owned by any person or persons now resident within the same, or hereafter born within it, shall ever be held in Slavery within the limits of said District:

Provided, That officers of the Government of the United States being citizens of the slaveholding states, coming into said District on public business, and remaining only so long as may be reasonably necessary for that object, may be attended into and out of said District, and while there, by the necessary servants of themselves, and their families, without the right to hold such servants in service being thereby impaired.

Sec. 3. That all children born of slave mothers within said District, on or after the first day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty, shall be free, but shall be reasonably supported and educated by the respective owners of their mothers, or by their heirs or representatives, and shall owe reasonable services as apprentices to such owners, heirs, and representatives, [until?] they respectively arrive at the age of ____ years when they shall be entirely free; and the municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown within their respective jurisdictional limits are hereby empowered and required to make all suitable and necessary provisions for enforcing obedience to this section on the part of both masters and apprentices.

Sec. 4. That all persons now within said District lawfully held as slaves, or now owned by any person, or persons now resident within said District shall remain such at the will of their respective owners, their heirs and legal representatives: Provided, That any such owner or their legal representatives, may at any time receive from the Treasury of the United States the full value of his or her slaves of the class in the Section mentioned upon which such slave shall be forthwith and forever free: And

Provided further, That the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall be a board for determining the value of such slaves as their owner may desire to emancipate under this section, and whose duty it shall be to hold a session for the purpose on the first Monday of each calendar month to receive all applications; and on satisfactory evidence in each case that the person presented for valuation is a slave and of the class in this section mentioned, and is owned by the applicant, shall value such slave at his or her full cash value and give to the applicant an order on the treasury for the amount, and also to such slave a certificate of freedom.

Sec. 5.

That the municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown, within their respective jurisdictional limits, are hereby empowered and required to provide active and efficient means to arrest and deliver up to their owners all slaves escaping into said District.

Sec. 6. That the elected officers within said District of Columbia are hereby empowered and required to open polls at all the usual places of holding elections on the first Monday of April next, and receive the votes of every white male citizen above the age of twenty-one, having resided within said District for the period of one year or more next preceding the time of such voting, for or against this act; to proceed in taking said votes in all respects not herein specified as at elections under the municipal laws, and with as little delay as possible to transmit correct statements of the votes so cast to the President of the United States; and it shall be the duty of the President to canvass said votes immediately, and, if a majority of them be found to be for this act to forthwith issue his proclamation giving notice of the fact, and this act shall only be in full force and effect on and after the day of such proclamation.

Sec. 7. That involuntary servitude for punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall in nowise be prohibited by this act.

Sec. 8.

That for all the purposes of this act the jurisdictional limits of Washington are extended to all parts of the District of Columbia not now included within the present limits of Georgetown.

Hon. William Butler, Treas. of State—

First time I saw Lincoln was when he came down Sangamon River from Macon Co. in canoe— He was as ruff a specimen of humanity as could be found— His legs were bare for six inches between bottom of pants and top of socks— Sawed the planks for flatboat with whip saw— Happened to be traveling with L one day — got to telling me about how he was in debt as a surety for another man; said when he saw a man in distress could not help going his security— Asked him how much he owed — told me \$400. Asked him what he would do if he had money— Said he would first pay his debts, and then would like to study law — but did not see how he could do it as he had no books or influential friends — said that every body wished him well — but he never could ask a man for a favor— I saw that he was an honest and worthy young man, and gave him took him into my family and for three years treated him the same as my son— I paid his debt of \$400, which L was not aware of till almost a year afterwards— Got him books and clothes and encouraged him in study of law—

L diffidence and generosity were the causes of his failing to accumulate any thing during early life— Was also unprepossessing in appearance — never would push himself forward—

L has tried again and again to pay me but I never would receive any thing— He came to me with the money a few years ago. I told him not to mention the subject again if he did not wish to offend me. Has been very grateful—

The following³¹ which is the beginning of a letter found in Sangamon Journal of June 15th, shows Mr. L's frankness—

New Salem, June 13, 1836.

31 This letter may have been pointed out to Howard when he was searching the files of the Illinois Journal for the text of Lincoln's bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.

To the Editor of the Journal:

In your paper of last Saturday, I see a communication over the signature of "many voters," in which the candidates who are announced in the Journal, are called upon to "show their hands." Agreed. Here's mine!

[Cumberland?]

He then states his position which was substantially that of the whig party—

Was elected to Congress in 1846, by 1400 majority of 1 over Peter Cartwright—³²

32 Peter Cartwright was an Illinois Methodist circuit-rider and Democratic political antagonist of Lincoln.

William G. Green—³³

33 This is probably the first of two interviews with Greene, as the other seems to refer to this one.

Met Lincoln at New Salem 1830, was Capt. of Flatboat— Boat belonged to Denton Offutt — was standing on mill dam trying to pry boat off — pant rolled up about 5 ft. dressed very ruff — blue Jeans breeches, a hickory shirt — alternate stripes of white and blue — made of cotton, buckeye chip hat — cost a "bit". Offutt had started from region about Decatur, Macon Co. 80 miles above Salem — got

aground at mill dam— Offutt rented mill to grind product — rented old Store house put goods in — Lincoln as clerk at 15 dols. per month — 2 or 3 mos. after he landed, said he would study grammar — good practical grammarian in three weeks— said to me Bill if that is what they call a science I'll subdue another— Asked about authors on Surveying told him Stuart's was good — borrowed it — Said he, If I thought the law was as easy as these, I would commence it— wanted to get hold of something that was knotty— 6 or 8 mos. after he came. boarded with John Cameron, Pres. preacher — 1.00 per week— Either at his books, wrestling, or running foot races, did it to be agreeable with the people— Richland, place volunteer company met. Kirk Patrick — man L worked for very prominent, influential man, candidate for Co. At least three fourths went to L. Patrick overbearing, L quite badly treated when he worked for K. Patrick. Was pleased to be elected [his] Captain—

Clerk for Offutt 1 year. L and Berry bought a Grocery Store, tea, coffee, sugar, powder, lead etc— Reuben Radford had a this store— "Clary's Grove Boys" had broken R's windows— Value of store 525 dols. I was to pay Rath Radford 400. L said he would give 125 for bargain— L had not a dollar, had used all to buy a compass and few books.— L paid his half of notes when fell due in 6 mos. I was surety on L & Berry's notes to Radford: This debt Hung over L and I me for some years as Berry had failed.— We called it the National debt— I at length paid the whole debt. About five years after L wrote to me in Tenn. that he was equitably and legally bound to pay all Radford's claim and he was now for the first time able to refund— L Paid me principal and interest in full. L would have me see his father, was cleverest homespun man I ever saw — could tell more good anecdotes than Abe L used grape vine for surveyor's chain. Always on side of justice, with the weak ever, as brave a man as ever lived—

Indian came to our camp, all said they must Kill him— L opposed it— Said barbarians would not kill a prisoner— [Lane?] & others said L was cowardly— Said try me— Swore if Indian was slaughtered must be done over his dead body. Asked them to come out and fight him, if they thought he was cowardly. Idians life was saved.

Popular as an officer in campaign — also on account of his athletic powers— But one man could throw him down — to wit Thompson— Marched first to Rock Island — was disbanded at Ottawa— Lincoln volunteered and went on in active service under Gen Dodge— Out about 4 mos. altogether. L I do not think ever drank a quart of liquor in his life — drank out of 40 gal. barrel— Cut Herndon ³⁴ off at the knees in debate at Petersburg— H called L an interloper, L said when he had been a candidate as often as Herndon he would quit— Had a horse for political campaign, but sold it for a compass and walked to legislature at S Vandalia about 100 miles L favored removal capital from Vandalia— 1836? L— became partner of Judge Logan ³⁵ the leading lawyer of Springfield

34 Archer G. Herndon was a political activist in Sangamon County and one of the “Long Nine.” His son, William H. Herndon, was Lincoln's third law-partner.

35 Stephen T. Logan.

Magistrates were afraid to issue process against “Clary's Grove Boys” Said in contest with Jack Armstrong I am sorry that you bet the money, not that I do not believe that there is a man on earth that can throw me now.— — Lincoln threw Armstrong first fall dogfall second— A caught L by leg and had better of him Jack after they had worked for a long time, caught him by leg and got better of him — L said if they wanted to wrestle fair he was ready, but if they wanted to fight he would try that— Jack quailed — called it drawn. Son of Armstrong³⁶ he volunteered to defend and cleared without a cent of compensation—

36 William “Duff” Armstrong, a son of Jack Armstrong, was successfully defended by Lincoln in a murder trial in 1858.

Long nine elected in 1834—

Lincoln hewed timbers for flatboat 8 miles N. W of Springfield at Sangamon town 1829 — St. [Gama?] — John Rohl among the wealthiest in S made the pins for boat—

Wherever he could find a young man he put him on right course, encouraged morality integrity and honesty — all that have looked up to him as an oracle have succeeded well. best surveyor in the country— —

Was always reading Burns & Shakspear Knew all of Burns by heart— Was as great when a surveyor or flatboatman in his circle as he is now in a higher one— Was the center of attention on all occasions— Was always appointed one of Judges when at horse race and was never objected to by either party.

When I was at Illinois College I brought home with me, one vacation, my young friend Dick Yates,³⁷ present Republican candidate for governor, and some other boys. In order that they might enjoy their visit, I proposed that we would go up to New Salem and see a talented and interesting young man by the name of Lincoln— When we approached I was mortified to find that Abe was lying stretched out flat on his back on a cellar door reading a paper— I introduced him and he appeared so awkward and ruff, that I was afraid my College friends would be ashamed of him—

37 Richard Yates

We made him go down to dinner with us— At the table he upset his large bowl of milk and when my Mother was trying to apologise for the accident L remarked that he would try and not let it trouble him hereafter—

I first bought Grocery store of Radford, then sold to Lincoln & Berry— When Berry fizzled out I helped L close up the business— I knew I would have Berry's part of note to pay—